

Dear Dick,

11/24/91

In the mail with your letter of the 21st was something I felt I had to take care of immediately. That took until the moment friends were due. The very moment they arrived I got a call from Jim Lesar because I'd recommended to Fox TV that they ask him to appear with Mark Lane tomorrow morning. I could not. I'd have loved to!! In the course of the conversation I mentioned to him that I was considering an offer for a trade edition of Whitewash. He ^{then} reminded me that quite some time ago he had relayed such an offer to me, that I had declined but said that if I changed my mind I'd consider that person's offer (a person unknown to me- I knew her husband), and while I do not expect anything of it now I'll keep my word and delay any decision for a reasonable but not long time.

Before these dear friends left I was dozing, I was that tired. I even slept ^{for} more than an hour longer than usual. When I sat to read with coffee before going out for the papers, a book I've been looking forward to reading, your letter came to mind. So without having had time to discuss this with Lil or to really think it through I have a few questions that I think present no difficulties except in some respects for us and I do not want to forget them because this afternoon is the Redskins game I do not want to miss, we are going out for supper and tomorrow is a full day, with the afternoo largely taken up with the CAT scan after two medical appointments in the morning.

For us, minor problems sometimes are not minor because of our limitations. One of these is extensive but unnecessary correspondence, an experience with had with Oswald in New Orleans. Others I recall were with Dell and Whirlwind, both, for us, disastrous. We lost ^{my} money on both. With you this will not happen but I learn from those experiences that what cannot be anticipated can come to pass.

I'll probably have to use all the time I have today after I read the paper and until the game reading and correcting what I wrote yesterday. So, without thinking this through, some of what occurred to me when I read your letter.

The advantages to us of what you propose should be getting the book greater circulation and reducing the work we have in mailing copies out. Of these the first is more important to me. So, I'd like to know what advertising and promotions there will be. I can participate in promotions for the most part only by phone but I've done that successfully in the past. (I recovered the printing costs of Whitewash IV in a short time by this means, some, perhaps most, doing radio talk shows by phone.)

There ^{now} is now more subject interest than when Whirlwind distributed the books but that experience indicates that merely having the books in the stores need not mean much.

How soon would they expect the book to be on sale can now mean much, as it also means that I should not delay the decision very long.

Should a new foreword or forewords be add and if so by whom, saying what?

I would like, by the way, for you to be copublisher.

While I would not insist on it I'd prefer for the index to this edition to be the existing index with new pages number, if that is possible, because presently it is also a subject index.

I now know nobody whose name on a foreword would mean anything but thinking not in personal terms but of the historical record and at the same time what can make the edition more attractive and perhaps help sell it recounting its importance as the first and the only enduring book and what I thereafter did could be attractive and informative. It might catch reviewer eyes, reviewers knowing nothing of the past or this history, this record.

Two little-knowns who might write forewords are Dave Wrone, coauthor of the only professional bibliography, and Jim Lesar, who handled the FOIA litigation.

There is also the fact that WhiteWash will be the only book available in the stores that is factual rather than fantasy theory. In some way I think this should be said.

When I picked up Fromkin's "The Peace to End All Peace" that I was given yesterday I was again impressed by the fact that as I've seen on other quality paperbacks the publisher wasted the inside covers. I never did and I got good reactions from the uses I made of that space. Of course there could be a reason I do not know. This book holds nothing at all about Fromkin and I wanted to know about him. I sometimes used that space for puffery and to give browsers a notion of content.

There will be a problem with our Books in Print listing and ads but that should be soluble. It will have to be or we'll have too much trouble. Ditto for our other books, which will have to be listed as available from us.

Perhaps the problem of eliminating unnecessary correspondence can be coped with by using ^a mailing out copies instead of referring them to C & G. I can wrap them, as I do now, or a more convenient packaging may perhaps be available, one that will protect the book while keeping the cost of postage in mind. *Do they have such a package?*

The cost to us of the xerox edition we have on hand is about 20%+ of the advance.

This is quite a profitable edition for us. We make about \$10 per copy. I guess our cost is a little greater because I just replenished our supply last week.

While I do not anticipate ^{one} ~~seen~~ of the Whirlwind problems I would like awareness of it. The large volume of returns were inadequately packaged and they were dumped spilling all over in our carport. A large percentage could not be sold, they were that damaged.

^{w/} While the volume may not at any give time be great, this book continues to sell and will, for us, for Wil or for the college, which will get out ~~some~~ entire stock, providing part-time work for students and some income to the archive.

These, off the top of the head, seem to me not to be serious problems. All should be soluble with little cost or difficulty. I suppose, again without having had time to discuss this or think it through, that perhaps the most significant to me is what the publisher will do with the book. And I do not hide the fact that having it associated with some bad ones is not pleasant!

In a brief discussions with Lil at breakfast and without her checking our books it appears that our net on Whitewash last year was about \$3,000. Assuming no change in sale, which means no reduction in interest on the one hand and no benefit from the attention to the Stone travesty, this means we'd have to get ^{more} ~~more~~ than the advance for us to break even. Other considerations are tax all in one year would be higher and the potential loss on stock on hand, as of today about \$1,250. (If I inquired into processes other than xeroxing there could probably be a reduction in manufacturing cost per book.) Dave Wrone has mentioned one on which I've not followed up.)

The Stone movie should increase C & G's sales of Crossfire. ^{There would be} ~~The seems to me two~~ competitive books, competitive in its advertising and promotion and in sales when the book buyer sees two in the stores and makes a choice. They'd have to be crazy not to exploit what Oliver Stone is giving them. I would! So, what does this mean to me and to Whitewash sales?

Not ~~two~~ two - four. C & G have Best "vidence and North's "solution."

Does one publisher having four competing books on sale and to promote at one time mean a problem for any one of the four book, particularly the one that does not postulate exciting theories the potential buyer is not in a position to evaluate? Without knowing I'm inclined to believe it does.

Approximately how many copies would have to be sold to recover the advance?

Without being free to just think this through these are the problems that I see and there may be more. So, I'd better think about it more.

Apparently I forgot to tell you that our zip has been changed to 21702.

The physical therapy seems to have had benefit already. Measuring indicates I have the ability to use my ankles more and that the muscles to be stretched have begun to stretch.

No results on the CAT scan until the orthopaedic surgeon gets the results and tells me. But I did doze through it. Hope you never need one but no pain. You just lie there.

Using the old zip means a delay of at least a day.

Hope you all have a good holiday.

Best,

Harold